

DOI: 10.15290/rtk.2017.16.1.07

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Hospitality and the Migration Crisis

The article considers the issue of hospitality in the era of increased inflow of immigrants and refugees to Western countries. The phenomenon of the present migration crisis shows that in countries shaped by Christianity, including Poland, there is a problem with accepting the admission of non-European populations from Muslim countries. The text attempts a sociological reconstruction of the patterns of hospitality in the light of the Bible and the Koran. It shows that the patterns of the host's obligations are convergent in both cases, while the guest's duties and motivation for hospitality are different.

Key words: migration crisis, hospitality patterns, Christianity, islam.

Introduction

Thoughts on international migration have shifted drastically since the migration crisis that began in 2014. The intense, unrestrained, and uncontrolled influx of migrants from outside of Europe¹ has stirred up public opinion and resulted in consternation and confusion on such a large scale as has never before occurred.² Modern mass media has

¹ J. Park, *Europe's migration crisis* (New York: Council of Foreign Relations, 2015); K. Michalska, "Trzy wymiary polityki azylowej i burden-sharing: między obowiązkiem a interesem," *Studia Migracyjne-Przegląd Polonijny*, no. 3 (2016): 53-79; P.L. Martin, "Europe's migration crisis: an American perspective," *Migration Letters* 13, no. 2 (2016): 307-319; R. Zhang and M. Fan, "Prediction of Approved Asylum Seekers in European Countries," *Procedia Engineering* 159 (2016): 338-347.

² D. Cianciara, "Kryzys związany z uchodźcami nie jest chwilowy," *Hygeia Public Health* 3, no. 50 (2015): 427-434.

and continues to widely disseminate visual images that show unusual and even dramatic situations from the point of view of the migrants entering different countries and the societies that are receiving them.

Although Poland has not yet been affected by the influx of refugees, the country is under intense pressure to accept migrants who have already entered the European Union (EU). Since May 2015, the Warsaw-based Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej (CBOS, Center for Public Opinion Research) has conducted a systematic study of attitudes toward migration. Repeated national polls show that those who have taken part in the surveys have radical views on the issue, as evidence by the fact that there has been a decline in the response “difficult to say” and rise in negative feedback regarding welcoming refugees.³ A poll conducted in Poland between March 30 and April 6, 2017 among a representative and random sample of 1075 adults shows that almost three out of four respondents (74%) object to relocating migrants from other countries to Poland, while the greatest number of respondents (43%) are absolutely against receiving refugees altogether. Only 22% of the respondents favor letting refugees into the country. Based on these results, it is clear that Poles are socially opposed to welcoming refugees. The following question, therefore, arises: what is the source of this reluctance or opposition?

The simplest answers to the aforementioned question can be found on the Internet in the numerous comments that people have posted in response to coverage of the migration crisis. In many of these comments, people express fear of migrants and fear for their own safety. The terrorist attacks that have taken place in countries that have welcomed refugees largely explain why this fear exists. Another underlying issue, however, is the religious differences between Poles and migrants. Though largely secularized, European societies have been shaped by a Christian worldview. The vast majority of migrants, however, come from Islamic countries. Encountering people from different religious traditions who practice their faith to varying degrees can easily result in confusion. Therefore, this article examines the migration crisis in light of how the Christian (the Bible) and Muslim (the Koran) religions understand hospitality.

³ Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, “Stosunek do przymowania uchodźców,” *Komunikat z badań*, no. 153 (Warsaw: Fundacja Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, 2016), http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2016/K_153_16.PDF.

The Social Conditioning of Hospitality

Physical contact is an important element of social interaction.⁴ Even brief and passing contact between two individuals can result in either a friendly exchange or indifferent and hostile gestures. Hospitality is the friendly reception or treatment of guests or strangers. On a large scale, and in light of the migration crisis, hospitality is associated with a given host country's openness to migrants. According to the *Random House Dictionary*, the word "hospitality" is defined as "the cordiality shown to guests; a warm and hearty welcome. One obligation of hospitality is to provide a plentiful amount of food to guests in order to make them feel well and in order not to appear miserly or selfish."⁵

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The condition of social relations to which hospitality belongs is the presence of guests. In Polish, the word "guest" has a several meanings.⁶ The first meaning is: "a person who comes to visit someone else; also, a participant in a party or ball." Since "comes" is a key word in the definition of guest, then each stranger, meaning each immigrant and refugee, can be treated as a guest. Admittedly, refugees come out of a need to seek refuge and not simply to visit. However, if one considers the fact that refugees who come often meet up with their families who are also connected with their own diasporas, then the term "visit" also corresponds with reality. Poland exemplifies the reality that refugees are treated only as transients when they come to countries where their diasporas are not present: "After a shorter or longer stay in our country, many refugees go to Western Europe. They are motivated to do so primarily by the prospect of getting better-paid jobs. Often, however, the main reason why they move is to join African diasporas or even specific ethnic groups that already exist in the large cities of Germany, France, and even Great Britain. Diasporas, which do not exist in Poland, are important support groups for immigrants."⁷

The second definition of the word "guest" specifies that the reason a person comes is "to use the services provided there." Although "guest" may be replaced by the word "customer," its meaning does apply to the refugees who are coming to Europe. These men, women, and children are often seeking protection, the provision of which is

⁴ P. Sztompka, *Socjologia* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Zak, 2009), 69.

⁵ "hospitality," *Dictionary.com Unabridged* (New York: Random House Inc., 2017), <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/hospitality> (Accessed: 11.10, 2017).

⁶ "gość," *Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN), <http://sjp.pwn.pl/szukaj/go%C5%9B%C4%87.html>.

⁷ M. Ząbek and S. Łodziński, *Uchodźcy w Polsce. Próba spojrzenia antropologicznego* (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza, 2008), 62.

a kind of service. Contemporary trends in the influx of refugees are not accidental. Refugees choose the countries to which they intend to flee beforehand, and, most often, they seek to get to countries where their level of security, including social security, would be highest. What refugees think about the conditions of the places they will stay and the social benefits they will receive in those places greatly draws or pushes them to go to specific countries.

The third meaning of the word “guest” is colloquial and refers to an “unknown man.” In this sense, the majority of the refugee population entering Europe is male; therefore, the common meaning of “guest” applies to this context.

The fourth meaning of word “guest” is “with admiration for someone who deserves recognition.” This recognition refers to respect resulting from an individual’s high social standing. In this case, it is difficult to attribute high social status to immigrants and refugees, even though they might have enjoyed high social standing and regard in their countries of origin. When refugees arrive to the countries to which they hope to belong, they are often at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Sometimes, however, certain refugees are awe-inspiring because of their determination, endurance, and survival skills. This is not the kind of respect, however, that determines a good place in the hierarchy of social prestige.

To some extent, hospitality is a form of investment in good relations between the host and the visitor (and whomever the visitor represents). Providing hospitality, especially over the long-term, is a rather burdensome investment, even when the guests are close to and anticipated by the host. Hospitality toward refugees and immigrants is more difficult because it requires that both parties overcome distance and foreignness. Ensuring a good stay is not just about providing meals and accommodation, but also about planning and spending a good time together. The institutionalization of hospitality occurs when certain institutions and public organizations take over the right to host. For example, refugee centers are often closed off to the host population and have direct contact with various organizations and mass media instead. In this case, the burden of hospitality is transferred to appointed institutions, which promotes the sociopsychological phenomenon known as diffusion of responsibility.

Mass media (including the Internet) plays a major role in shaping social attitudes toward immigrants and refugees. For many people, especially youth, the virtual world is an integral part of daily life. Often individuals are more “immersed” in the virtual world than in the real

world. However, it is important to note that the media covers primarily sensational occurrences and follows the principle that bad news is good news: “Since there is a demand for bad news, it is constantly necessary to keep an eye out for and provide an attractive supply of evocative and terrifying news and images. Each new viewer means increased viewership, which also means profit.”⁸ This aspect of the media is not conducive to developing a spirit of hospitality toward migrants and refugees. Nevertheless, media messages play an important role in accustoming viewers to the cultural diversity and problems that accompany contemporary migration.

Providing hospitality to international migrants applies to the following forms of displacement:

1. **Employment migration** – employment contracts for foreign workers (from the German “*Gastarbeiter*,” meaning “guest-worker”)
2. **Educational migration** (foreign students)
3. **Refugees**
4. **Tourism** (“commercialized hospitality”)⁹

The types of international migration mentioned here differ from each other depending on the migrants’ reasons and purpose for migrating and on their sociodemographic structure. The one characteristic that all types of migration have in common, however, is the temporary nature of the migrants’ stay. The length of time that foreign workers (*Gastarbeiters*) are able to stay in a given country is determined by their employment contract. Likewise, the duration of a student’s stay is determined by the duration of his studies. In the case of refugees, they remain in a country as long as the danger in their place of origin continues. As for tourists, the length of their visit is limited by the number of days of their holiday or vacation. In each case, the migrant-guest is the one who comes and goes. The question arises, however, as to whether it is possible to apply the concept of hospitality to the influx of migrants; for, the refugees might not return—or have the option to return—to their own country.¹⁰ For example, in the municipality of Ferrara, Italy, the locals of Gorino barricaded the entrance to their town and refused to let a small group of refugees enter under the pretext

⁸ D. Piórkowski, “Bad news/Good news,” (2013), *Deon.pl*, August 1, 2013, <http://www.deon.pl/inteligentne-zycie/obiektyw/art,253,bad-news-good-news.html>, (Accessed: 04.24.2017).

⁹ K. Podemski, “Socjologia podróży” 2005, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im Adama Mickiewicza.

¹⁰ D. Pluta, “Zarys zjawiska uchodźstwa. Aktorzy zjawiska uchodźstwa a proces kształtowania uchodźcy,” *Uchodźcy: teoria i praktyka*, eds I. Czerniejewska and I. Main (Poznań: Stowarzyszenie Jeden Świat, 2008): 34-49.

that they were protesting against the “dictatorship of hospitality.”¹¹ This example shows an extreme reaction to an attempt to increase the number of refugees in given place.

The following are some characteristic factors of the dilemmas associated with being hospitable in a migration crisis:

Demographic and cultural factors are related to the mass influx and cultural diversity of the population. The following questions then arise: How does a country or city accept such a large number of people who are coming from different cultural backgrounds? What should be done so that both the host and the guest respect the rules of “acceptance”?

Political and solidarity factors are related to the EU’s political conditions and objectives. Acceptance of refugee immigrants is one of the characteristic features of the policies of very highly developed countries. However, until now, host countries controlled the flow of migrants into them. The German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s invitation to refugees and her “*Wir schaffen das*” (“We can handle it”) motto¹² launched a spontaneous migration process that emboldened refugees to try to bypass current procedures for crossing the borders into the EU. Scenes from immigrants and refugees’ siege of the Keleti railway station in Budapest at the beginning of September 2015 depicted how dramatic the situation really was.¹³ Hungary was the first to respond to the escalation of the uncontrolled displacement and to demand respect for the EU’s law “under which anyone wishing to move within the Union should have a valid Schengen passport and visa.”¹⁴

Normative factors relate to how to welcome visitors, show hospitality, and justify one’s reasons for doing so. Moral and religious norms determine in what ways individuals should receive guests, how they

¹¹ M. Lehnert, “Protest przeciwko zakwaterowaniu uchodźców we włoskiej gminie pod Ferrarą,” *Wiadomosci.com*, October 25, 2016, <http://wiadomosci.com/protest-przeciwko-zakwaterowaniu-uchodzcow-wloskiej-gminie-pod-ferrara/>.

¹² Interview with Prof. Andrzej Sakson, “Rok temu kanclerz Merkel ‘zaprosiła’ uchodźców. Pokazała tym swoje nowe polityczne oblicze,” *RMF24.pl*, August 31, 2015, <http://www.rmf24.pl/fakty/swiat/news-rok-temu-kanclerz-merkel-zaprosila-uchodzcow-pokazala-tym-sw,nId,2261354>, (Access: 12.09.2016).

¹³ Crash, “Dworzec Keleti w Budapeszcie i oczekiwanie imigrantów na pociąg do ‘raju,’” *YouTube.com*, September 3, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrwJhFM6T34>, (Accessed: 02.02.2017).

¹⁴ “Tysiące uchodźców, chaos na dworcu w Budapeszcie. W trasie wyrzucono imigrantów z pociągu,” *Polskie Radio.pl*, September 3, 2015, <http://www.polskieradio.pl/5/3/Artykul/1498868,Tysiace-uchodzcow-chaos-na-dworcu-w-Budapeszcie-W-trasie-wyrzucono-imigrantow-z-pociagu> (Accessed: 01.11.2017).

should refer to them, what guests deserve in the name of hospitality, and in what ways hosts demonstrate inhospitality.

Biblical Examples of Hospitality

The Bible is a sacred book for Christians. It is, therefore, an appropriate source on which to base an “ideal type” of hospitality in a sociological sense. For the purpose of this article, biblical examples of hospitality were conveniently found in the electronic Polish version of the Millennium Bible by searching for keywords, specifically “hospitality.”¹⁵ Surprisingly, however, the search engine found only two instances where the word “hospitality” is used (even a cursory reading of the Bible reveals more examples of hospitality). One match was found in the Old Testament in Sirach 29:21-28.¹⁶ The second match was located in the New Testament in 1 Peter 4:9. Astonishingly, when taken together, both of the passages constitute a complementary whole in the sense that the Old Testament passage presents hospitality on the part of a guest, while the New Testament depicts hospitality on the part of the host. In the Old Testament, the concept of hospitality presented in Sirach 29:21-28 is as follows:

Life’s prime needs are water, bread, and clothing,
and also a house for decent privacy.
Better is the life of the poor under the shadow of their own roof
than sumptuous banquets among strangers.
Whether little or much, be content with what you have:
then you will hear no reproach as a parasite.
It is a miserable life to go from house to house,
for where you are a guest you dare not open your mouth.
You will entertain and provide drink without being thanked;
besides, you will hear these bitter words:
“Come here, you parasite, set the table,
let me eat the food you have there!
Go away, you parasite, for one more worthy;
for my relative’s visit I need the room!”
Painful things to a sensitive person
are rebuke as a parasite and insults from creditors.

¹⁵ “gościnność,” *Biblia Tysiąclecia* (Poznan: Wydawnictwo Pallotium, 2006), <http://biblia.deon.pl/rozdzial.php?id=619&slowa=go%B6cinno%B6%E6> (Accessed: 09.23.2017).

¹⁶ Translator’s note: for the purposes of this article, all translations of the Bible into English come from the *New American Bible, Revised Edition* (Charlotte: St. Benedict’s Press, 2011). This is the official translation of the Bible used by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop.

The above description is basically a warning to avoid being a guest.

In the New Testament, 1 Peter 4:9 says the following about being hospitable: “Be hospitable to one another without complaining.” This brief injunction is directed exclusively to the host. The command “without complaining” is unconditional and involves reciprocity: “be hospitable to one another.” The language of this text implies that the author is referring to fellow believers who must show hospitality to one another. So, inasmuch as the Old Testament warns about being a guest, the New Testament encourages and, in principle, obliges believers to host others.

A search for the words “guest” or “visit” in the biblical text yielded the following sociological characteristics of hospitality:

- The close social proximity between a guest and host: “Afterward, Raguel slaughtered a ram from the flock and gave them a warm reception. When they had washed, bathed, and reclined to eat and drink, Tobiah said to Raphael, ‘Brother Azariah, ask Raguel to give me my kinswoman Sarah [as my wife]’” (Tobit 7:8-9).
- The possibility of a guest being granted a political career: “For instance, Haman, son of Hammedatha, a Macedonian, certainly not of Persian blood, and very different from us in generosity, was hospitably received by us. He benefited so much from the good will we have toward all peoples that he was proclaimed ‘our father,’ before whom everyone was to bow down; and he attained a position second only to the royal throne” (Esther 8:10-11).
- Openness and sensitivity to the needs of travelers, regardless of who they are: “No stranger lodged in the street, for I opened my door to wayfarers” (Job 31:32).
- Safeguarding fugitives, which sounds like an injunction to rescue refugees: “Hide the outcasts, / do not betray the fugitives. / Let the outcasts of Moab live with you, / be their shelter from the destroyer” (Isaiah 16:3-4).

The Bible also describes the social environments of hospitality, including examples of inhospitable and even dangerous communities. For example, Genesis 19:1-9 depicts how different inhabitants of the same town react to newcomers:

The two angels reached Sodom in the evening, as Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he got up to greet them; and bowing down with his face to the ground, he said, “Please, my lords, come aside into your servant’s house for the night, and bathe your feet; you can get up early to continue your journey.” But they replied, “No, we will pass the night in the town square.” He urged them so strongly,

however, that they turned aside to his place and entered his house. He prepared a banquet for them, baking unleavened bread, and they dined. Before they went to bed, the townsmen of Sodom, both young and old—all the people to the last man—surrounded the house. They called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to your house tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have sexual relations with them.” Lot went out to meet them at the entrance. When he had shut the door behind him, he said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not do this wicked thing! I have two daughters who have never had sexual relations with men. Let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you please. But do not do anything to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.” They replied, “Stand back! This man,” they said, “came here as a resident alien, and now he dares to give orders! We will treat you worse than them!” With that, they pressed hard against Lot, moving in closer to break down the door.

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The passage cited above reveals an attitude of openness and attentiveness to the needs of others. Lot was sufficiently attentive and open because, when he saw the visitors, he bowed down before them and then unhesitatingly welcomed them into his home. (Although the gesture of bowing was a typical form of greeting, it is possible that this gesture had a deeper meaning). Lot’s insistence (“He urged them so strongly”) is characteristic of ideal hospitality. Lot was also probably a realist and knew the local setting very well. In other words, he knew that it could be dangerous for the travelers to walk along the city streets in the middle of the night. While the inhabitants of Sodom had seen the visitors arrive, they did not go out to greet them. However, when it came time for the travelers to rest, the inhabitants appeared in front of Lot’s home, demanding that the visitors come out. Their inhospitality took the form of impudence; not only did they not help the newcomers, they also did not want Lot to help the travelers. Lot, however, was ready to expose himself and his family members to danger in order to help his guests. In response to Lot’s bold opposition, the group of men reacted aggressively, saying, “This man came here as a resident alien, and now he dares to give orders!” thereby demonstrating that the host is the one who exercises authority.

Another biblical example found in Judges 19:16-25 describes a similar social situation:

In the evening, however, an old man came from his work in the field; he was from the mountain region of Ephraim, though he was living in Gibeah where the local people were Benjaminites. When he noticed the traveler in the town square, the old man asked, “Where are you going, and where have you come from?” He said to him, “We are traveling

from Bethlehem of Judah far up into the mountain region of Ephraim, where I am from. I have been to Bethlehem of Judah, and now I am going home; but no one has taken me into his house. We have straw and fodder for our donkeys, and bread and wine for myself and for your maidservant and the young man who is with your servant; there is nothing else we need.”

“Rest assured,” the old man said to him, “I will provide for all your needs, but do not spend the night in the public square.” So he led them to his house and mixed fodder for the donkeys. Then they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

While they were enjoying themselves, the men of the city, a bunch of scoundrels, surrounded the house and beat on the door. They said to the old man who was the owner of the house, “Bring out the man who has come into your house, so that we may get intimate with him.” The man who was the owner of the house went out to them and said, “No, my brothers; do not be so wicked. This man has come into my house; do not commit this terrible crime. Instead, let me bring out my virgin daughter and this man’s concubine. Humiliate them, or do whatever you want; but against him do not commit such a terrible crime.” But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and thrust her outside to them. They raped her and abused her all night until morning, and let her go as the sun was coming up.

The men in Gibeah behaved like the men in Sodom. Only one older, overworked man who was returning late from work in the field was able to quickly assess the travelers’ situation and encourage them to stay in his home. Joy followed after the travelers were welcomed into the man’s home, but this joy was quickly disrupted when the men of the city came to the old man’s house. In order to save his guests, the old man tried to distract the attention of the sexual assailants away from the men by offering his daughter and the traveler’s concubine. However, only the traveler’s concubine was released from the house and gang-raped. Since the concubine accompanied the traveler, she was also a guest. Yet, it was her owner and fellow guest who gave her up to be assaulted.

In both passages from the Old Testament, the appearance of guests leads to tragic outcomes that reveal the effects of lack of respect toward guests. The features of hospitality that are common to both situations include:

- Those who are hospitable to guests were also guests themselves.
- Cities were unsafe for travelers.
- The male inhabitants of a city sought amusement and fulfillment of their sexual needs by raping visitors.

- The arrival of guests revealed social divisions (between foreigners and inhabitants, between men and women) and hastened the occurrence of tragic events.

In the New Testament, hospitality is a key means to determine who belongs to the community of believers. Christ himself identified with strangers and said, “For I was [...] a stranger and you welcomed me” (Mt. 25:35). In Luke 7:37-38, 44-26, it is clear that Jesus highly valued and publicly praised hospitality, regardless of the kind of individuals who provided it:

Now there was a sinful woman in the city who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee. Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment, she stood behind him at his feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment.

Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? When I entered your house, you did not give me water for my feet, but she has bathed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but she has not ceased kissing my feet since the time I entered. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she anointed my feet with ointment.

New Testament descriptions of the social contexts of hospitality show that not all people receive the privilege to provide hospitality: “When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, ‘He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner.’ But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, ‘Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over’” (Lk. 19:7-8). Zacchaeus’ behavior indicates that being counted among those who are privileged to provide hospitality was extremely valuable and ennobling.

As the following passages from Scripture reveal, being hospitable was one of the most important characteristics and duties of the early Christians:

- “Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels” (Hebrews 13:2).
- “Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality” (Romans 12:13)
- “In the vicinity of that place were lands belonging to a man named Publius, the chief of the island. He welcomed us and received us cordially as his guests for three days. It so happened that the father of Publius was sick with a fever and dysentery. Paul visited him and, after praying, laid his hands on him and healed him. After

this had taken place, the rest of the sick on the island came to Paul and were cured. They paid us great honor and when we eventually set sail they brought us the provisions we needed” (Acts 28:7-10).

It is clear from the following passages that, within Christianity, hospitality also signified prestige (respect) and social status:

- “Therefore, a bishop must be irreproachable, married only once, temperate, self-controlled, decent, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not aggressive, but gentle, not contentious, not a lover of money” (1 Tim. 3:2-3).
- “Honor widows who are truly widows [...] with a reputation for good works, namely, that she has raised children, practiced hospitality, washed the feet of the holy ones...” (1 Tim. 5:3, 10).

According to the New Testament, believers should host first and foremost fellow believers: “For they have set out for the sake of the Name and are accepting nothing from the pagans. Therefore, we ought to support such persons, so that we may be co-workers in the truth” (3 John 1:7-8). Not only are there ideal hosts, there are also ideal guests who should behave in the following manner:

For we did not act in a disorderly way among you, nor did we eat food received free from anyone. On the contrary, in toil and drudgery, night and day we worked, so as not to burden any of you. Not that we do not have the right. Rather, we wanted to present ourselves as a model for you, so that you might imitate us. In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat (2Thess. 3:7-10).

Christian guests should be set apart by their peaceful attitude, willingness to work, and not burdening their host by their stay.

Hospitality in Islam

The migration crisis in many European countries has shown that hosting people who profess Islam is very challenging. It is a common belief that Muslims “have a more difficult time integrating into societies than other people; they create a foreign element that destabilizes and even threatens the order of the Western world.”¹⁷ For this reason, it is worthwhile to try to perceive the Muslim community according to the criterion of ideal hospitality; for, one of the reasons that the East and West find it difficult to mutually adapt to each other might be identified in this issue. Reconstructing the ideal type of hospitality

¹⁷ J. Zdanowski, “Muzułmanie w świecie zachodnim: wspólnota czy wspólnoty,” *Migracje, historia, kultura*, ed. J. Zamojski (Warszawa: Neriton, 2002), 111-123.

can be achieved by analyzing how the Quran presents hospitality.¹⁸ For the purpose of this article, the online version of the Quran was used to search for the terms “hospitality,” “guest,” and “visit.” With regard to the word “hospitality,” the search engine provided no results and stated: “No matches have been found.” When a search for the word “visit” was conducted, the search engine found one match. And, for the word “guest,” the search engine found four matches.

Along with the Bible, the Quran presents Lot and Abraham as exemplar hosts. The Quran, however, emphasizes something different in its accounts of Lot and Abraham’s hospitality—namely, the host’s anxiety and fears that arise when guests arrive:

And when Our envoys came to Lot,
he was anxious for them,
and concerned for them.
He said, “This is a dreadful day.”

And his people came rushing towards him—
they were in the habit of committing sins.
He said, “O my people, these are my daughters; they are purer for you.
So fear God, and do not embarrass me before my guests (Hud, 77-78).

The second passage demonstrates not only Abraham’s hospitality but also his fear upon the visitors’ arrival:

Has the story
of Abraham’s honorable guests reached you?
When they entered upon him,
they said, “Peace.”
He said, “Peace, strangers.”
Then he slipped away to his family,
and brought a fatted calf.
He set it before them.
He said, “Will you not eat?”
And he harbored fear of them.
They said, “Do not fear,”
and they announced to him the good news
of a knowledgeable boy (The Spreaders, 24-28).

The examples of hospitality cited above show that respect for and fear of strangers should not affect a host’s duty to provide hospitality. Furthermore, as evidenced below, the term “hospitality” appears in

¹⁸ For the purpose of this article, the following translation and online edition of the Quran was used: Talal Itani, trans., *Quran in English* (2014), <https://www.clearquran.com/downloads/quran-in-modern-english.pdf> (Accessed: 11.10.2017).

the Quran as a kind of reward that God himself can give for piety and good deeds:

As for those who feared their Lord,
for them will be gardens
beneath which rivers flow,
wherein they will abide forever—
hospitality from God.
What God possesses
is best for the just (Family of Imran, 198).

As for those who believe
and do righteous deeds,
for them are the Gardens of Shelter—
hospitality for what they used to do.
But as for those who transgressed,
their shelter is the Fire.
Every time they try to get out of it,
they are brought back into it,
and it will be said to them,
“Taste the suffering of the Fire
which you used to deny” (Prostration, 19-20).

Surely, those who say:
“Our Lord is God,” [...] Hereafter, wherein you will have
whatever your souls desire,
and you will have therein
whatever you call for.
As Hospitality from an
All-Forgiving, Merciful One (Detailed, 30-32).

The Quran mentions hospitality considerably less frequently than the Bible. The examples of hospitality provided above are similar (e.g., the host’s generosity) to those in the Bible, but the atmosphere in which the guests are received is different because it is one full of anxiety and fear of strangers. When conducting an electronic search of the word “guest” in the Quran, other words such as “hostility,” “hardship,” “nudity,” and “multiplicity” came up in addition to the two examples of Lot and Abraham.¹⁹

¹⁹ Translator’s note: In Polish, the word for “hospitality” is “*gościnnność*,” and for “guest” is “*gość*.” Therefore, when conducting an electronic search for these words in Polish, other words with similar suffixes “-ość” appear, such as “*hojność gospodarza* (a host’s generosity),” “*wrogość* (hostility),” “*srogość* (hardship),” “*nagość* (nudity),” and “*mnogość* (multiplicity).”

It is difficult to exclude the fact that the people who are entering Europe from Muslim countries also create an atmosphere of uncertainty and threat, which is an element of their manner of being and cultural patterns.

Anna Pawełczyńska notes that “Christians and Muslims have differing opinions on how to treat people of other religions. The universal moral norms of Christianity determine injunctions and prohibitions that apply to every human person. The moral norms of Islam, however, do not apply to ‘unbelievers;’ these norms [apply to and] protect [only] their community of believers. This is why Muslims are encouraged to expand and, thereby, spread the religion of Muhammad to all peoples and followers of other religions.”²⁰

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Conclusion

Fears of an influx of immigrants and refugees has become a “sign of the times” in both European and non-European countries. On January 27, 2017, newly-elected American President Donald Trump’s provided one of the most spectacular examples of this fear by issuing a decree that temporarily limited the immigration of refugees from seven countries: Iraq, Iran, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen, and Somalia, all of which are inhabited mainly by Muslims.²¹ A court in San Francisco temporarily suspended this policy, which blocked the entrance of refugees into the United States and has been perceived as anti-immigration.²²

Among the EU’s Member States, attitudes towards refugees and immigrants are developing in an atmosphere of uncertainty with regard to further migration policies. Current discussions about erecting fences along borders or negotiating ways to keep refugees outside of Europe reveal that Europeans believe that closing Europe off from the influx of refugees is the most realistic option.

²⁰ A. Pawełczyńska, “O istocie narodowej tożsamości” 2010, Lublin: Polihymnia

²¹ “Donald Trump krytykowany na świecie za piątkową decyzję,” *Business Insider: Poland*, January 29, 2017, <https://businessinsider.com.pl/polityka/iran-irak-wielka-brytania-niemcy-jemen-o-dekrecie-donald-trumpa/1lmz6xj>, (Accessed: 10.29.2017).

²² “Nowy dekret Trumpa w sprawie imigrantów,” *Business Insider: Poland*, January 29, 2017, <http://www.fakt.pl/wydarzenia/swiat/dekret-donald-trumpa-w-sprawie-imigrantow-trump-nie-wpusci-uchodzcow/vn87nef> (Accessed: 02.17.2017).

Proponents of multiculturalism state that “building an open society is a Sisyphean endeavor [...]”²³ Yet, they see no reason to abandon their pursuit of this ideal: “Sisyphus [...] was a happy man who, neither trusting any ideology nor devoting himself to any faith, rolled the boulder through his daily experiences. He is a hero who has neither hope nor doubt—someone who never gives up.”²⁴ This type of thinking fosters openness to the influx of immigrants and refugees, but it rejects any religious justifications for such an attitude. Meanwhile, the humanitarian challenges of the migration crisis mean that religious perspectives must be taken into account. On these grounds, receiving immigrants and refugees, which allows people to act as both guests and hosts, is justified.

GOŚCINNOŚĆ W DOBIE KRYZYSU MIGRACYJNEGO

W artykule rozważana jest kwestia gościnności w dobie wzmożonego napływu imigrantów i uchodźców do krajów zachodnich. Zjawisko obecnego kryzysu migracyjnego pokazuje, że w krajach ukształtowanych przez chrześcijaństwo, w tym w Polsce, pojawia się problem z akceptacją przyjmowania ludności pozaeuropejskiej, pochodzącej z krajów muzułmańskich. W tekście podjęta została próba socjologicznej rekonstrukcji wzorów gościnności w świetle Biblii i w Koranie. Pokazuje ona, że wzory dotyczące powinności gospodarza są w obu przypadkach zbieżne, natomiast inaczej ujęte są kwestie powinności gościa i motywacji do gościnności.

Słowa kluczowe: kryzys migracyjny, wzory gościnności, chrześcijaństwo, islam.

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²³ Michał Jędrzejek, interview with Basil Kerski in “Ten obcy, ten nasz,” *Miesięcznik Znak*, no. 727 (2015): 35, <http://www.miesiecznik.znak.com.pl/ten-obcy-ten-nasz/>.

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